

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program presents this
“Long-Term Care News & Tips Online”

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NATIONAL NEWS

1. NCCNHR releases report documenting stories of abuse and neglect

The National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) has released a major report, titled *Faces of Neglect: Behind the Closed Doors of Nursing Homes*. This document tells the stories of 36 ordinary residents in 12 states who were neglected to the point of abuse. These tragic situations occurred in for profit and non profit facilities, assisted living and nursing homes, to those who were private pay and those who were using Medicaid to supplement their own resources. The document puts a human face on the gaping failure of public policy to adequately protect the elderly and disabled who are neglected or abused in long term care facilities. It also highlights how high turnover, poor supervision, understaffing and lax enforcement put residents at risk and how proposed federal medical malpractice legislation would effectively eliminate residents' ability to hold facilities accountable for harm in the civil justice system. The report was released at a Congressional briefing held on April 28. NCCNHR Executive Director Alice Hedt, family members of two residents featured in "Faces of Neglect," and William Scanlon, former Director of Health Care Issues at the U.S. General Accounting Office, spoke at the briefing. To order copies of the report, go to the NCCNHR Web site at www.nccnhr.org/uploads/FacesOrderForm.pdf and download the order form. You can view excerpts from the report at www.nccnhr.org/action_center/366_1994_12825.cfm.

Source: www.nccnhr.org/action_center/366_1994_12825.cfm; Congressional Staff Briefing advisory

2. Research to Practice: Study Shows Value of Registered Nurses for Long-Term Care

National Nurses Week begins May 6, so this is a good time to take note of a study that highlights one reason nurses caring for elders deserve our support. According to a report in the American Journal of Nursing, providing residents of long-term care settings 30 to 40 minutes of care by a registered nurse each day could reduce healthcare costs by as much as \$3,200 per resident per year. Patients receiving the care suffered fewer adverse outcomes such as pressure ulcers, urinary tract infections and hospitalizations.

"Geriatric nurses will be an increasingly crucial part of the long-term care picture with the burgeoning of the aging population," says ASA member May Wykle, dean of the School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland. "Nurses can provide the range of direct care that is essential in this setting -- for the well-being of the patient and for the effective functioning of the system."

The article, "RN Staffing and Long-Term Care" by Susan D. Horn and colleagues (November 2005), is available for \$19.95 on the American Journal of Nursing Web site at www.ajnonline.com. (To order, click on the "Login" link, sign up as a guest user, then search for the article by author name.)

Source: American Society on Aging Newsletter May 2006

The following information has been obtained from the National Ombudsman Resource Center

3. Conference Explores How to Harness the Energy of Direct-Care Workers to Provide Person-Directed Care

Culture change is a journey that can start almost anywhere, but it won't get far unless the nursing assistants, home health aides, and other direct-care workers who provide 80 percent of the hands-on care are truly on board.

To explore ways of improving the quality of care delivered to consumers by improving the quality of direct-care jobs, the Pioneer Network and the Direct Care Alliance are co-hosting **Celebrate Direct-Care Workers**, the only national conference held by either group this year.

Join us as providers, direct-care workers, and consumers come together to strengthen and support these key workers in order to create a more person-centered environment.

Sessions of particular interest for administrators, directors of nursing and other long-term care managers include:

- Embracing Person-Directed Care: Improving Relationships between Direct-Care Workers and Nurses;
- Nurses and Nursing Assistants: United We can;

- Innovative roles for Direct Care Workers in Culture Change;
- Creating a Supportive Environment: It's All About Relationship;
- Building Relationship Among Nurses and Direct Care Workers.

Featured speakers include; Wendy Lustbader, Susan Misiorski, Francis Battisti, Megan Hannan, Anna Oritgara, Jeanne Heid-Grubman; Carol Hegeman, Karen Stobbe and Joanne Rader.

Celebrate Direct-Care Workers November 30-December 2, 2006 at the spectacular Buena Vista Palace Resort and Spa, Orlando, Florida www.CelebrateDirectCareWorkers.org.

4. Disaster Planning Guide for Facilities Published by AHCA

The American Health Care Association (AHCA) and the National Center For Assisted Living have published a new manual to help long term care providers plan for both natural and man-made disasters. The manual is in large part a response to the 2005 hurricanes that devastated the Gulf Coast, including many nursing homes. "Disaster Planning Guide: A Resource Manual for Developing a Comprehensive Preparedness Plan," suggests that nursing home facilities establish plans for evacuation and non-evacuation. The guide also advises facilities to prepare for transportation, housing, finance, insurance, and legislative and legal issues in the event of fires, tornados, bomb scares, hazardous accidents in the community, bio-terrorism, hypo- and hyperpyrexia and hurricanes. The manual, which was developed by the Florida Disaster Preparedness Committee and the Florida Health Care Association, is meant to be a reference tool to assist in the implementation of a disaster operation plan. For more information, visit www.ahca.org.

Source: McKnight's Long Term Care News & Assisted Living, April 25, 2006

5. FDA issues guidance on hospital beds

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has published final guidance designed to reduce the occurrence of hospital bed entrapments. This guidance, which is voluntary, identifies special issues associated with hospital bed systems and provides design recommendations for manufacturers of new hospital beds and suggestions for health care facilities on ways to assess existing beds. The guidance characterizes the body parts at risk for entrapment, identifies the locations of hospital bed openings that are potential entrapment areas, recommends dimensional criteria for new hospital bed systems, provides information about reporting entrapment adverse events, and includes a description of recommended test methods for assessing gaps in hospital bed systems. The FDA has received approximately 691 entrapment reports over a period of 21 years from January 1, 1985 to January 1, 2006. In these reports, 413 people died, 120 were injured, and 158 were near-miss events with no serious injury as a result of intervention. These entrapment events have occurred in openings within the bed rails, between the bed rails and mattresses, under bed rails, between split rails, and between the bed rails and the head or foot boards. Elderly patients in hospitals and nursing homes, especially those who are frail, confused, restless, or who have uncontrollable body movement, are most

vulnerable to entrapment. Entrapments have occurred in a variety of patient care settings, including hospitals, nursing homes, and private homes. Long-term care facilities reported the majority of the entrapments. To access the guidance, please visit www.fda.gov/cdrh/beds.

Source: Food and Drug Administration Press Release, March 9, 2006

6. Culture Change Materials Available

A number of practical, innovative tools to create more resident-centered facilities are available on the website of The Commonwealth Fund, which helped fund their development. Tools include: “Champions for Care: A Workbook for Long-Term Care Providers,” which helps staff members build teams and take on leadership roles; “Modeling and Measuring Nursing Home Reform: The Culture Change Staging Tool,” a free, web-based tool that enables nursing homes to assess their progress in becoming resident centered; and “Guidance for Bathing Patients with Dementia: Bathing Without a

Battle,” a CD and video that offers practical techniques caregivers can use to make bathing a pleasurable experience for people with dementia. To access the materials, visit www.cmwf.org/tools/tools_list.htm?attrib_id=11991.

Source: Quality Jobs/Quality Care, March 13, 2006

7. June Ladies Home Journal Article features Nursing Home Advocacy

The June issue of the Ladies Home Journal is now out with an article featuring Martha Deaver from Arkansas who was NCCNHR 2005 Janet Tulloch Award Winner for her statewide advocacy. Martha has now drawn national attention to nursing home advocacy issues. For only the third time in its history, the Ladies Home Journal has a petition - this one supporting Representative Waxman's staffing bill, H.R. 4293, that is based on the HHS minimum nurse staffing standard that closely parallels the NCCNHR staffing standard,. The article also includes a page on the resident directed care promoted by the Pioneer Network and a reference to the NCCNHR website for information on family councils and how to find an ombudsman. While we are disappointed that the article reflects ombudsmen as mediators rather than as resident advocates, the information will enable family members to find assistance. Note: NCCNHR has added a special section on our website for the readers of Ladies Home Journal.

Action idea: Sign the petition and mail to Ladies Home Journal or sign online - www.lhj.com/nursinghome; e-mail your colleagues and friends to sign the petition.

Source: May 9, 2006 email from National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform

VIRGINIA NEWS

8. Governor Kaine Announces Spanish Language Internet Resource for Health Care Providers and Consumers

RICHMOND - Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced the launch of the Virginia Department of Health's (VDH) new Cultural and Linguistic Appropriate Standards, or CLAS Act, Internet site. The site is designed to assist health care providers in delivering culturally competent care for their limited English proficient patients.

It contains many commonly used phrases in the clinical setting, their Spanish translations, and audio files where listeners can practice correctly pronouncing these phrases. Over time, as many as 24 additional languages will be added.

"The CLAS Act Web site is a great tool for Virginia residents that require language assistance in order to receive the best care possible," said Governor Kaine. "It should be emphasized, however, that the site is a tool and not a replacement for regular interaction with doctors and other medical professionals. This is another important step for giving Virginia's health care community the proper resources that it requires to provide the necessary services to the entire Commonwealth."

VDH's Office of Health Policy and Planning (OHPP) also will release a CLAS Act Resource Directory, identifying successful programs and resources for health providers to improve their ability to deliver core health care services to limited English proficiency patients.

"The OHPP is proud to support Governor Kaine and are proud of his leadership on this critical issue," said Kathy Wibberly from OHPP. "We have worked with various statewide partners, like the Sharpe Community Scholars at the College of William and Mary, to improve health care providers' ability to communicate more effectively with Virginia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities in order to ensure that patients are receiving the best available care."

The OHPP created the site to offer a comprehensive resource for culturally and linguistically appropriate health care resources. According to VDH, improvements in communication will lead to better health outcomes, greater patient satisfaction, and a decrease in the cost of health care due to delays in accessing basic preventive care. Medical errors and inefficiencies due to compromised comprehension will also be minimized by enhanced communication abilities.

For more information on the CLAS Act Virginia Web site, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/ohpp/clasact.asp.

Source: May 10, 2006 email from Virginia Elderights Coalition.

9. Residents on Ventilators Must Leave Virginia Nursing Home

Seven residents who receive ventilator care at a Virginia nursing home have been informed that the facility is closing its ventilator unit and they must find a new home. The unit at Avante at Lynchburg is the only one of its kind in that part of Virginia, and one of only three in the entire state. A spokesman for Avante said that the decision was for economic reasons; "Medicaid reimbursement is substantially lower than Avante's cost of providing these services," he said. The spokesman went on to state that the corporation would try to maintain ventilator services at its Roanoke facility, but would not "continue indefinitely to absorb large losses in the course of providing respiratory therapy services to Medicaid patients." The projected closing of the unit is June 1, and residents and their families are scrambling to find options. One resident's daughter said, "It's almost like an eviction- and you haven't done anything wrong."

Source: *The News & Advance*, April 18, 2006

Please note that the items are included for informational purposes only and do not imply endorsement by the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program or any governmental agency.

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